

CLAIMS

1. A method of creating an electronic training guide for using a first software program comprising:

5 capturing a first screen from the first software program using a second software program to form a first screenshot;
adding text corresponding to the first screenshot, wherein text is added using the second software program; and
assembling the electronic training guide using the second software
10 program, wherein the electronic training guide:
includes at least part of the first screenshot and corresponding text;
and
is at least part of a third software program or a file that can be used with the third software program.

15 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising capturing additional screens from the first software program to form additional screenshots, wherein the additional screens are captured in an order a user of the first software program would see if performing a task using the first software program.

20 3. The method of claim 1, wherein assembling includes compiling a file including the at least part of the first screenshot and corresponding text to create an executable file.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising adding a keyword associated with the first screen.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising adding a related topic that is related to but different from a task associated with the first screen.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising reviewing a lesson using a data processing system, wherein:

the lesson includes the at least part of the first screenshot and the corresponding text; and
the lesson is reviewed using the second software program.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein:

the first screenshot and corresponding text are parts of a lesson; and
assembling further comprises:

reading a lesson design file to obtain information used to link different parts of the lesson to each other; and
compiling the lesson design file to form a runtime file for the lesson.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

extracting a keyword from the text; and
compiling the keyword into a keyword file.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein assembling further comprises creating a file with data to build a menu and a related topic.
10. The method of claim 9, wherein assembling further comprises embedding
5 information from a style file into the corresponding executable file.
11. The method of claim 1, further comprising adding a user-defined action to a file including the at least part of the first screenshot.
- 10 12. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic training guide is external to and can be run independently from the first software program.
13. The method of claim 1, wherein assembling further comprising reading a
15 style file to obtain information related to an appearance as seen by a user of the electronic training guide.
14. The method of claim 13, wherein the appearance is related to a background view, an icon, and how a transition between views is presented.

15. A method of creating electronic training guides for a first software program comprising:

recording a screenshot from a screen of the first software program; and
creating at least two different electronic training guides using the

5 screenshot, wherein:

the at least two different training guides pertain to a single topic; and

the different electronic training guides are selected from a first

lesson, a second lesson that is different from the first lesson, a

test, and an executable file.

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16. The method of claim 15, wherein creating includes creating only the first
lesson and the second lesson.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein creating includes creating only the first
15 lesson, the second lesson, and the test.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein creating includes creating only the first
lesson, the second lesson, and the executable file.

20 19. The method of claim 15, wherein creating includes creating the first lesson,
the second lesson, the test, and the executable file.

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20. The method of claim 15, wherein:

creating further comprises:

creating the first lesson; and

creating the second lesson after creating the first lesson; and

5 the first lesson and the second lesson are directed to performing the same task using the first software program.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein:

creating further comprises creating the executable file after creating the

10 first lesson; and

the first lesson and the executable file are directed to performing the same task using the first software program.

22. The method of claim 15, wherein:

15 the first lesson has a first amount of text;

the second lesson has a second amount of text; and

the first amount is larger than the second amount.

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28. The method of claim 26, wherein the detailed information appears within a pop-up screen.

5 29. The method of claim 23, further comprising pressing and releasing a keyboard key for the user to progress through the sequence of views.

30. The method of claim 23, further comprising activating a feature of an electronic pointing device for the user to progress through the sequence of views.

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31. The method of claim 23, further comprising moving a pointer of the electronic pointing device without requiring the pointer to point to any specific location for the user to progress through the sequence of views.

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32. The method of claim 23, wherein the second software program is external to and can be run independently from the first software program.

33. The method of claim 23, wherein the second software program automatically progresses in response to an activity by the user while the first software program is active.

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34. A method of training a user of a first software program comprising:
accessing a second software program including a test to test the user's
ability to perform at least one operation of the first software
program; and
5 taking the test for the at least one operation, wherein:
at least one view is displayed to the user during the test and is
substantially similar to at least one corresponding view in the
first software program; and
during the test, the user performs substantially the same acts as the
10 user would if performing the at least one operation using the
first software program.
35. The method of claim 34, wherein:
taking the test includes producing an incorrect answer; and
15 in response to the incorrect answer, the second software program displays
a view requesting whether the user needs assistance.
36. The method of claim 34, wherein, for at least one of the substantially the
same acts, the second software program does not instruct the user how to
20 perform that act.
37. The method of claim 34, wherein the second software program is external
to and can be run independently from the first software program.
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38. A method of guiding a user in using a first software program comprising:
accessing a first software program;
accessing a second software program, wherein the second software
program includes information to help guide the user in using the first
software program;
performing a first act using the first software program; and
performing a second act using the second software program while the
first software program resides in an active window.

39. The method of claim 38, wherein performing the second act comprises
pressing and releasing a key.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the key is a system key.

41. The method of claim 39, wherein the key is a CTRL key.

42. The method of claim 39, wherein the key is an ALT key.

43. The method of claim 38, wherein performing the second act comprises
activating a feature on an electronic pointing device.

44. The method of claim 43, wherein the second act includes moving a pointer
of the electronic pointing device without requiring the pointer to point to
any specific location to progress through the sequence of views.

45. The method of claim 38, further comprising pressing at least two of the system keys to display detailed information related to the second act.

46. The method of claim 38, wherein the second software program is external
5 to and can be run independently from the first software program.

47. A data processing system readable storage medium having code embodied therein, the code including instructions executable by a data processing system, wherein the instructions are configured to cause the data
10 processing system to perform a method of creating an electronic training guide for using a first software program, the method comprising:
in response to a first signal, capturing a first screen from the first software program to form a first screenshot;
in response to a second signal, adding text corresponding to the first
15 screenshot, wherein text is added to a first file; and
in response to a third signal, assembling the electronic training guide, wherein the electronic training guide:
includes at least part of the first screenshot and corresponding text;
and
20 is at least part of a second software program or a guide file that can be used with the second software program.

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48. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein the method further comprises, in response to fourth signals, capturing additional screens from the first software program to form additional screenshots, wherein the additional screens are captured in an order a user
5 of the first software program would see if performing a task using the first software program.

49. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein assembling includes compiling the first file that includes the at least part of
10 the first screenshot and corresponding text to create an executable file.

50. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein the method further comprises, in response to a fourth signal, adding a keyword to the first file, wherein the keyword is associated with the first
15 screen.

51. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein the method further comprises, in response to a fourth signal, adding a related topic to the first file, wherein the related topic is related to but
20 different from a task associated with the first screen.

52. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein the method further comprises displaying a lesson as it would appear to a user of the electronic training guide, wherein the lesson includes the first
25 screenshot and the corresponding text.

53. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein:
the first screenshot and corresponding text are parts of a lesson; and
assembling further comprises:

5 reading the first file to obtain information used to link different
 parts of the lesson to each other; and
 compiling the first file to form a second file that is a runtime file
 for the lesson.

10 54. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein
the method further comprises:

 extracting a keyword from the text; and
 compiling the keyword into a second file.

15 55. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein
assembling further comprises compiling the first file for a lesson to form a
second file that is a corresponding runtime file.

20 56. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 55, wherein
assembling further comprises embedding information from a third file that
includes style information into the second file.

25 57. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein
the method further comprises, in response to a fourth signal, adding a user-
defined action to the first file.

58. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein the electronic training guide is external to and can be run independently from the first software program.

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59. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 47, wherein assembling further comprises reading a second file to obtain information related to an appearance as seen by a user of the electronic training guide.

10 60. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 59, wherein the appearance is related to a background view, an icon, or how a transition between views is presented.

61. A data processing system readable storage medium having code embodied therein, the code including instructions executable by a data processing system, wherein the instructions are configured to cause the data processing system to perform a method of creating electronic training guides for a first software program, the method comprising:
- in response to a first signal, recording a screenshot from a screen of the first software program; and
- in response to second signals, creating at least two different electronic training guides using the screenshot, wherein:
- the at least two different training guides pertain to a single topic; and
- the different electronic training guides are selected from a first lesson, a second lesson that is different from the first lesson, a test, and an executable file.
62. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 61, wherein creating includes creating only the first lesson and the second lesson.
63. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 61, wherein creating includes creating only the first lesson, the second lesson, and the test.
64. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 61, wherein creating includes creating only the first lesson, the second lesson, and the executable file.

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69. A data processing system readable storage medium having code embodied therein, the code including instructions executable by a data processing system, wherein the instructions are configured to cause the data processing system to perform a method of guiding a user in using a first software program, the method comprising:
- 5 in response to a first signal from the user, accessing the code that includes information to help guide the user to perform an operation using the first software program; and displaying a sequence of views, wherein:
- 10 the sequence of views are in an order in which acts would be performed if using the first software program; and each view within the sequence of views includes at least a portion of a corresponding view within the first software program, wherein the view within the sequence of views is substantially
- 15 the same as the at least a portion of the corresponding view in the first software program.
70. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 69, wherein displaying can be performed such that a view from the sequence of views
- 20 is visible while the first software program is displayed to the user.
71. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 69, wherein a view within the sequence of views includes no more than approximately 30 words of basic information related to that view while the first software
- 25 program is displayed to the user.

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5 77. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 69, wherein displaying is performed in response to a signal that a user has moved a pointer of the electronic pointing device without requiring the pointer to point to any specific location for the user to progress through the sequence of views.

10 78. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 69, wherein the code is external to and can be run independently from the first software program.

79. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 69, wherein the code allows for automatically progressing in response to an activity by a user while the first software program is active.

80. A data processing system readable storage medium having code embodied therein, the code including instructions executable by a data processing system, wherein the instructions are configured to cause the data processing system to perform a method of training a user of a first software program, the method comprising:

in response to a first signal from the user, accessing a test within the code to test the user's ability to perform at least one operation of the first software program; and

giving the test for the at least one operation, wherein:

while giving the test, at least one view is displayed to the user and is substantially similar to at least one corresponding view in the first software program; and

while giving the test, the user is to perform substantially the same acts as the user would if performing the at least one operation using the first software program.

81. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 80, wherein the method further comprises:

receiving an incorrect answer from the user; and

in response to the incorrect answer, displaying a view requesting whether the user needs assistance.

82. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 80, wherein, for at least one of the substantially the same acts, the code does not instruct the user how to perform that act.

83. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 80, wherein the code is external to and can be run independently from the first software program.

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84. A data processing system readable storage medium having code embodied therein, the code including instructions executable by a data processing system, wherein the instructions are configured to cause the data processing system to perform a method of guiding a user in using a first software program, the method comprising:

in response to a first signal, accessing the code, wherein the code includes information to help guide the user in using the first software program; and

in response to a second signal, performing a function while the first software program resides in an active window.

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85. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 84, wherein the second signal that corresponds to a user pressing and releasing a key.

20 86. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 85, wherein the key is a system key.

87. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 85, wherein the key is a CTRL key.

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88. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 85, wherein the key is an ALT key.

5 89. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 84, wherein the second signal that corresponds to a user activating a feature on an electronic pointing device.

10 90. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 89, wherein the second signal that corresponds to a user moving a pointer of the electronic pointing device without requiring the pointer to point to any specific location to progress through the sequence of views.

15 91. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 84, wherein the method further comprises, in response to a third signal that corresponds to a user pressing at least two of the system keys, displaying detailed information related to the second signal.

20 92. The data processing system readable storage medium of claim 84, wherein the code is external to and can be run independently from the first software program.

93. A software program product for creating an electronic training guide for using a first software program, the software program product comprising:
a screen capture module adapted to capture a screen seen when using the first software program;

5 an editor module adapted to add text related to the captured screen; and
an assembly module adapted to assemble the captured screen and text to form at least part of a second software program or a file that can be used with the second software program.

10 94. The software program product of claim 93, wherein the second software program include guidance for using the first software program.

95. The software program product of claim 93, further comprising a compression module.

15 96. The software program product of claim 93, wherein the assembly module includes a compiler.

20 97. The software program product of claim 93, wherein the second software program include an executable file.

98. The software program product of claim 93, wherein the second software program does not include an executable file.

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101. The software program product of claim 93, further comprising a style editor module.